

EXHIBIT

29

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
FLORENCE DIVISION**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE,
INC., *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

CITY OF MYRTLE BEACH, *et al.*,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 4:18-cv-00554-DCC

DECLARATION OF JOSEPH WASHINGTON

I, Joseph Washington, hereby state as follows:

1. I am over the age of eighteen and am competent to make this Declaration. I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth herein.

2. I am a resident of Myrtle Beach, SC. I have lived in Myrtle Beach since 2002.

3. I am African American.

4. I have been a member of the United Methodist Clergy for forty years. Since 2015, I have served as pastor at HOPE Church, located at 624 Singleton Rd., Conway, SC 29526.

5. I became involved with Black Bike Week in my capacity as a pastor in 2015. I felt that the City of Myrtle Beach, the Myrtle Beach City Police Department and Horry County Police, and the Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce were unfairly targeting African-American bikers during Black Bike Week because of their race. I felt that each of these entities did not view or treat African-American bikers during Black Bike Week as they would treat other tourists who come to the City. The creation of the traffic loop in 2015, as well as the police presence

during Black Bike Week, I felt sent the message to African-American bikers that “we don’t want you here.”

6. In 2015, in an effort to combat what I saw as unfair treatment of participants in Black Bike Week, I organized a Welcome and Prayer Blessing for Black Bike Week participants. I reached out to Michael Chesnut, member of the Myrtle Beach City Council, members of the African-American biker community in Myrtle Beach, a group of white Harley Week attendees, and several other Myrtle Beach and Horry County officials to create an event that would welcome Black Bike Week participants to Myrtle Beach before the official start of the event.

7. On the Thursday of Black Bike Week in 2015, we held a service at the Carolina Forest Elementary School 285 Carolina Forest Blvd, Myrtle Beach, SC 29579. Approximately 150 people, including Black Bike Week and Harley Week riders, participated in the service and the Blessing of the Bikes. We then paired white and African American bikers together and rode from Carolina Forest Elementary to the Atlantic Beach City Hall as a sign of unity and strength.

8. I received very positive feedback from Black Bike Week participants about the event. Many told me that they felt it was the first time that Myrtle Beach had ever welcomed them in and I was proud of the event and its message.

9. After the 2015 Black Bike Week, the City of Myrtle Beach held a series of meetings to plan an event to welcome bikers for Black Bike Week in 2016. I was not initially invited to these meetings. I began to participate in the meetings when the City invited me but I stopped participating because I did not agree or feel comfortable with the tone I felt the meetings took. I felt that there was a presumption on behalf of the City that Black Bike Week participants were not “well-behaved” and I did not agree with that sentiment.

10. It is my belief that, through these meetings, the Welcome Event at the Convention Center is what the Welcome and Prayer Blessing turned into. Since I stopped participating in the meetings, I have not been involved in or invited to subsequent planning meetings to welcome bikers to Myrtle Beach.

11. In 2015, 2016, and 2017, I witnessed the traffic loop put into place during Black Bike Week. Because of the intense traffic the loop creates, I do my best to avoid it by intentionally staying away from downtown Myrtle Beach after 10 pm. One year, however, despite my best efforts to stay away from the loop and from downtown, I got caught in the loop accidentally, and spent an hour stuck in traffic.

12. I have also witnessed the overwhelming police presence during Black Bike Week. The sheer number of officers that patrol the event feels intimidating and oppressive. I believe that the police presence, in combination with the loop, creates an unwelcoming and confrontational atmosphere.

13. As a resident of Myrtle Beach, I also witness Harley Week each year. During Harley Week, there is no traffic loop. Unlike during Black Bike Week, the bikers are able to cruise along Ocean Blvd. and throughout the City much more freely. The police presence during Harley Week is also radically different than from during Black Bike Week. During Harley Week, the number and the attitudes of police officers make the City feel safe and protected, whereas during Black Bike Week, the police presence feels oppressive and intimidating.

14. Having observed Harley Week and Black Bike Week, I can conclude that there is no justification for the different treatment of the events other than the race of the participants. I have two daughters who are around the same age as many of the Black Bike Week attendees. As I have told Myrtle Beach City Manager John Pedersen and the Myrtle Beach Chamber of

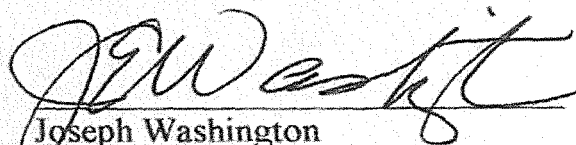
Commerce, I would strongly urge my daughters not to attend Black Bike Week because I feel that the actions of the City and the police mean that they would be targeted and their safety would be compromised.

15. The differential treatment between Black Bike Week and Harley Week makes me feel sad that my African-American brothers and sisters are being treated differently than white bikers. I feel ashamed and embarrassed that they are treated this way in order to have what should be a joyful gathering.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

EXECUTED WITHIN THE UNITED STATES ON: April 10, 2018.

BY:


Joseph Washington